

THE ANDRÉS SEGOVIA ARCHIVE
GENERAL EDITOR: ANGELO GILARDINO

Federico Mompou

CANCIÓN Y DANZA

(SOBRE DOS CANTIGAS DEL REY ALFONSO X)

para guitarra



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front cover:

ALFONSO X DE CASTILLA Y LEÓN

a miniature from the book
"Libros de retratos de los reyes"
(1954)

back cover:

Julio Lopez Hernández

THE ANDRÉS SEGOVIA MONUMENT

Linares, Jaén (Spain)



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FOREWORD



FEDERICO MOMPOU (1893-1987)

The Catalan composer Federico Mompou y Dencausse was born on April 16th, 1893, to a Catalan father and a French mother. He began his piano studies at the *Conservatorio del liceo* in Barcelona, giving his first recital at the age of 15. However, his ambition to be a composer was sealed the following year when he heard Fauré perform some of his own music.

Like many other Spanish musicians, Mompou moved to Paris to further his musical education, arriving there in 1911 with letters of introduction from Enrique Granados, who had himself studied there twenty years earlier. In Paris, Mompou studied privately with Isidor Philipp and Ferdinand Motte-Lacroix (both for piano) and Marcel Samuel-Rousseau (harmony). Two years later he moved back to Barcelona, remaining there until 1921.

From the time of Mompou's first visit to Paris, and his subsequent return to Barcelona, date some of his earliest published compositions (all for piano, like so much of his music). First came the *Impresiones íntimas* (1911/14), a movement of which (*Barca*) was later transcribed for the guitar by Regino Sainz de la Maza and performed by him in Paris in the 1920s.⁽¹⁾ Shortly afterwards came the *Scènes d'enfants* (1915/18), orchestrated by Alexandre Tansman in 1936,

and the *Cants màgics* (1917/19). A description of the latter pieces by Henri Collet could almost sum up Mompou's style:⁽²⁾

«Dans cette œuvre si bien écrite pour le piano se révèle un tempérament à la fois énergique et rêveur, volontaire et méditatif. On y voit paraître des lambeaux mélodiques populaires naïfs et tendres ou douloureux et la mise en œuvre est d'un art qui étonne de la part d'un musicien dont le métier n'a pas été poussé. Et c'est que l'auteur pense la musique autant qu'il la sent et que chaque suite d'accords s'impose à son esprit avec une logique inexorable. Elles passent sur des pédales floues toutes gonflées de la sève circulante dans le tronc mélodique choisi et s'éteignent dans la tonalité première qui ne fut jamais perdue de vue.»

[«In this work, so well written for the piano, is revealed a technique at once vigorous and dreamy, deliberate and meditative. Fragments of popular melodies – naive and tender or doleful – appear here and there; and the workmanship is astonishingly skilful in view of the composer's undeveloped technique. And this is because the composer thought as much as felt the music, and because each progression of chords came into his mind with an inexorable logic. They pass by over fluid pedals, full of vital force from their main melodic stock, and

(1) Sainz de la Maza performed *Barca* in Paris on February 18th, 1925, at what appears to have been his debut concert in the city.

(2) Henri Collet (1885-1951), French composer, writer and authority on Spanish music and culture. His *Briviesca* for solo guitar is published in this series. The quotation is taken from the Salabert editions catalogue of the works of Mompou.

fade away in the original key, which had never been lost sight of.»]

Also from this period comes the first diptych in Mompou's long sequence of *Canciones y danzas*, of which there were to be eventually fifteen.

In 1921 Mompou returned to his beloved Paris, where he was befriended by Poulenc and other members of *Les six*, though stylistically he had little in common with them. The 1920s were, for Mompou, a period of growing fame, thanks in part to some extremely appreciative comments and articles written by French critics such as Henri Collet and, notably, Emile Vuillermoz.

The 1920s were also a decade of growing fame for the guitarist Andrés Segovia, born in the same year as Mompou. His Paris debut concert on April 7th, 1924, was a turning point in his career, and marked the start of his fame outside Spain and Latin America. Although we have no record of a meeting between Segovia and Mompou in Paris at this time, Segovia's visits to the city were so frequent, and his reputation so high, that Mompou could hardly have been unaware of him. Mompou's legendary shyness may account for his not presenting Segovia with a composition at this time, unlike so many of his fellow composers in Paris – such as Pierre de Breville, Pierre-Octave Ferroud, Joaquín Nin, Raymond Petit and Gustave Samazeuilh (to name just a selection) – who eagerly dedicated compositions to Segovia.⁽³⁾

In the 1930s, for no clear reason, Mompou's compositional output dropped drastically. Only a few short pieces were published in this decade, and in 1941 the second world war drove him back to Barcelona, where he remained for the rest of his long life. Shortly after his return to

Barcelona, Mompou met the pianist Carmen Bravo, who was later to become his wife. With this meeting came a resumption of composing activity. In 1942 the sequence of *Canciones y danzas* was resumed, the fifth appearing that year. Work on the *Canciones y danzas* was to continue until 1972, when fifteenth and final diptych appeared. This last *Canción y danza* (also titled *Pastoral*) is for organ, and is one of only two *Canciones y danzas* not for the piano (the other being number 13, written for the guitar in 1972).

The tenth *Canción y danza*, which is based on two of the *Cantigas de Santa Maria* of Alfonso el Sabio (Alfonso X “the wise”, the thirteenth-century Spanish king, poet and patron of the arts), is exceptional in a different way: in addition to the version for piano there exist other versions made by Mompou himself. Prior to the discovery of the present piece, there was one other published version: a choral work dating from 1953, entitled *Dos cantigas de Alfonso X el Sabio (Cançó i dansa n. 10)*.⁽⁴⁾ With the discovery by Angelo Gilardino in May 2001 of Mompou's own guitar transcription, a third version, carrying equal authority with the other two, is now known. Angelo Gilardino's discovery also brings the total number of known works by Mompou for the guitar to three.

Other particularly significant works from the second half of Mompou's life include the remarkable *Música callada* (1959/67), in four books, amounting to twenty-eight piano pieces and lasting over an hour; *Improperios* (1963), a sacred work for solo baritone (or bass), choir and orchestra, which denies the notion that Mompou was unable to write large-scale works for large-scale forces; and the *Suite compostelana* (1962), his greatest guitar work. Like the present transcription, the *Suite compostelana* was written for Segovia. Its manuscript was

(3) Pierre de Breville's *Fantaisie* (1926), Pierre-Octave Ferroud's *Spiritual* (1926) and Raymond Petit's *Sicilienne* (1925) are published in this series.

(4) The extent of Alfonso's creative involvement in the *Cantigas de Santa Maria* is not entirely clear.

discovered in May 2001 in the same collection as the present piece. The autograph score of the *Suite compostelana* differs sufficiently from the version published in 1964 by editions Salabert to justify the preparation of a new edition: this is also published in the Segovia series.

Federico Mompou continued to compose into his eighties, and, occasionally, to travel abroad. In 1978 he suffered a cerebral haemorrhage, which effectively ended his composing career. He lived a further nine years, confined to a wheelchair, and died on June 30th, 1987, just four weeks after the death of Andrés Segovia.

Allan Clive Jones

Northamptonshire (UK), December 2001.

THE COMPOSITION

To the best of our knowledge, the first of the three compositions which Federico Mompou wrote for guitar was his masterpiece, the *Suite compostelana*, whose autograph manuscript, held in the Segovia archive at Linares, is dated 1962. We believe that the guitar version of the tenth *Canción y danza* / (*sobre dos cantigas del rei Alfonso X*) / *para guitarra*, whose autograph manuscript was also found in the Segovia archive, was written after the *Suite compostelana*, but we do not know exactly how much later because the manuscript is undated. There is no question, however, that it is a setting for guitar of the same diptych, with almost the same title (*Canción y danza* / *X* / *sobre dos cantigas del rey Alfonso X* / *siglo XII*), which already existed for piano (composed in 1953 and published by Salabert in 1957). It was probably the warm acknowledgement that Andrés Segovia gave the *Suite compostelana* (of which he was the dedicatee) that encouraged Mompou to add another item – albeit a less grand one – to his guitar output, and for which he decided to transcribe for the guitar one of his existing pieces for piano. This version was totally unknown: in fact, there is no mention of

it in the catalogue of Mompou works.⁽⁵⁾

Mompou's choice undoubtedly shows that he considered the tenth *Canción y danza* especially suited to the guitar. Perhaps he had even conceived the piano version with the sound and the style of vihuela polyphony in his mind, and saw the guitar version as the realisation of a form which existed in the background of the piano piece. This might also explain why the composer did not make any reference to the piano version in the guitar version. A detailed comparison between the piano and the guitar versions shows how skilful a transcriber of his own work Mompou was: his transcription is free from any mistake, while retaining almost all the harmonic idiosyncrasies of the piano version.

In our edition, based on the manuscript for guitar, we have, in a few places, restored the counterpoint found in the piano version, which appears more satisfactory and which presents no problems when performed on the guitar. On the other hand, in a very few other places, we have adhered to the guitar version when it was more accessible for playing. We have also adopted the tempo, dynamic, agogic and expression marks from the piano version in order to complete the score, and we have added detailed fingering. Included in this edition is a facsimile reproduction of the manuscript of Mompou's version for guitar. Those readers who are interested in seeing the origin of some of the changes we have made should consult the piano version published by Salabert (who also published the version for choir).

We are grateful to Mrs. Carmen Bravo – the Spanish pianist and the wife of the composer – for her kind help.

Angelo Gilardino

Vercelli (Italy), December 2001.

(5) Catálogos de / Compositores / Federico / Mompou /
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CANCIÓN Y DANZA

(SOBRE DOS CANTIGAS DEL REY ALFONSO X)

para guitarra

Edited by
Angelo Gilardino
and Luigi Biscaldi

Federico Mompou
(1893-1987)

I - Canción

Larghetto molto cantabile ♩ = 60

mf

rit. -----

poco rit. -----

poco rit. ----- *f* *poco rit.* ----- *a tempo*

dimin. *rit.* *p*

II - Danza

Amabile ♣ = 126

Amabile ♩ = 126

CVII

p

7

CV

CV

CVII

CV

13

CV

CVII

CV

CX

rit.

f a tempo

19

CV

dolce

25

pp

mf

31

poco rit. ---

p

37

43

f rit.

pp

XV